



info·bits

City of Torrance

spring • 2013

Traffic and Lighting Section

*Public Works Department
Street Operations Division*

Richard Hall, Supervisor
Steven Cooper, Manager

Public Works, Traffic and Lighting Section, consists of a staff of eleven employees who monitor and maintain the City's 70,000 street and regulatory signs, 130 traffic signal intersections, 200 miles of pavement markings, and about 2,000 park lights. The division responds to emergency calls around the clock, seven days a week, and provides barricades for events all around the city.

Paint, Sign and Signal Shops are housed in the City Yard along with two stencil trucks that double as emergency signage vehicles through the use of the large attached flashing arrow signs, one high tech highway striper truck (with three steering wheels!), an assortment of hand stripers and grinders, and a thermo-plastic trailer that is towed by a pick-up truck. "We recently acquired a signal trailer that hydraulically raises temporary traffic signal lights, this puts an intersection back in business in a very short time," said Supervisor, Richard Hall.



The Traffic and Lighting Section.



Traffic Painter, Chris Simoneau and Maintenance Worker, Mike Gonzalez' day starts at 5am when they make the rounds in any of 26 areas of the city to check the reflectivity of the signs. They can make street signs in the sign shop and take them out in the field and install them the same day. A SignCad program controls a large plotter that cuts out letters and numbers that



get applied to transfer tape and then to an aluminum sign blade that has been prepared with a reflective background. Larger quantities of generic signs are outsourced. STOP signs are a priority; sign shop staff is called upon to replace STOP signs sometimes in the middle of the night, usually accident related. A typical street sign has a life of up to ten years; sun fading is the most common cause for the need to replace a sign.



Meanwhile, in the shop, bags of white and yellow plastic beads await their turn in the thermo-plastic trailer melting tank. Single and double line hand stripers, for the application of water based paint and one for thermo plastic, along with a grinder for removing striping are all stored here with a selection of gigantic stencils for painting street legends. This section can go through 1500-1600 gallons of paint in a three month spray period.



The thermo-plastic trailer is used in the cooler months of the year starting in September. A crew of six is needed to run the process of replacing street lane striping at the busiest intersections with an application of thermo-plastic that must be heated to 450 degrees in the propane fueled tanks on the trailer. The molten plastic is then transferred to butane heated tanks in the hand applicator. Water is sprayed on the newly applied material to hasten cooling. Thermo-plastic is more durable than paint.



Continued on Page 5

Service Awards 2013

Human Resources threw another great Barbeque luncheon to recognize city employees who celebrated a multiple of 5 years anniversary in 2012. Plates were piled high with ribs, tri-tip and all the fixings and honorees relaxed at the big round tables in the Toyota Meeting Hall in the Cultural Arts center to enjoy each other's company. Emcee's Brian Sunshine and John Jones kept the ceremony moving and ten lucky honorees won great door prizes including John Kalinski who won the Grand Prize, an Ipod Mini! Mayor Scotto welcomed the honorees and praised them for their dedication and caring treatment of citizens.



Torrance Origins

The History Behind the Acquisition & Naming of City Facilities

“Columbia Park”

By Michael George

In 1938 a special issue of the Torrance Herald proclaimed “Torrance on the Air”! Columbia Broadcasting (CBS), who owned the KNX radio station, built a state of the art 50,000 watt transmitter, art moderne streamlined building and 500’ antenna on the corner of Hawthorne and 190th. The transmission station was a tourist attraction from the start. The city named the KNX Transmission Station “Columbia Park” in honor of Columbia Square in Hollywood. In the early 1960’s, the station was sold, then the 500’ antenna was felled by vandals who cut through the supporting wires. The final blow was dealt in 1967 when the burned out, rundown shell of the once beautiful KNX transmission building, was torn down.

In 1968, CBS donated its 17 acre site to the City and a debate began on how large the park should be. At the time, the largest park was just seven acres and the City would have to join Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) to qualify for the \$900,000 in state and federal funds needed to purchase the additional 35 acres which is what finally happened. Over the next 20 years, the park’s amenities developed. Over the last few years, the park has been updated and is a popular destination.

KNX transmitter building sometime in the 60s, courtesy of Sam Gnerre, Daily Breeze



KNX building new 1938...

Located on the northwest corner of Prairie and 190th Street, Columbia Park’s 52 acres include picnic areas, barbecues, a softball diamond, soccer fields, playground equipment, horseshoe courts, a sand volleyball court, fitness court, public restrooms and community gardens.

You can be notified when the new Info-Bits is online! Here’s How. . .

An electronic service, eNotify allows anyone to receive updates on certain web pages. You can subscribe to Info-Bits and other city information updates by registering online at <http://www.torranceca.gov/20726.htm>. Once you have registered, you can choose from a menu of update notifications for various city web pages, including Info-Bits. Check the boxes to choose the information you would like to monitor and you will be emailed when the web pages are updated.

Here is the process to sign up:

- Log In
- Click e-notify
- Click webpage subscription
- Under Human Resources is Retiree Resources
- Check Retiree Resources box
- Click save on bottom of page
- A message on top of page will say “Database updated successfully”
- Exit or log out

Torrance Transit’s New Rapid Bus Program



Torrance Transit’s new Lines 3 & 4 were created as part of Metro’s High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Express Lanes project on the I-110 Freeway providing express North to South service between the South Bay and downtown Los Angeles, and East to West between the South Bay Galleria and the Long Beach Transit Galleria. The one-year demonstration project aims to enhance travel options and ease congestion on two of the region’s busiest freeways using clean fuel buses and vanpools.

Retirees - March 1, 2013 to June 1, 2013

Name	Title	Retirement Date	Years of Service
Elizabeth Bassar	Transit Supervisor	2/18/2013	14 years
Gennaro Centofanti	Park Maintenance Supervisor	2/20/2013	28 years
Brenda Felt	Secretary	3/22/2013	15 years
Christine Hamayasu	Graphic Designer	2/28/2013	20 years
William Hazen	Senior Grading Inspector	3/15/2013	35 years
Lemar Milner	Bus Operator	2/28/2013	20 years
Robert Reeve	Building Maintainer	3/7/2013	21 years
William Schultz, Jr.	Water Service Technician I	3/9/2013	22 years
Timothy Taylor	Water Service Technician I	2/7/2013	28 years
Steven Unglaub	Police Lieutenant	2/28/2013	32 years

Promotions - March 1, 2013 to June 1, 2013

City Manager	Zoe Yun	Police
Kelli Lee	Library Assistant II	Steven Jenkinson
Human Resources Administrator	Fire	Lieutenant
	Michael Baadan	Paul Kranke
Community Development	Jeremy Bactat	Ryan Peterson
Alexander Ortega	Fire Captain	Sergeant
Senior Building Inspector	James Duarte	
Community Services	Brent Nunez	
Jeffrey Bischoff	Fire Engineer	
Lead Maintenance Worker	Richard Fick Jr.	
	Senior Fire Inspector	

New Hires - March 1, 2013 to June 1, 2013

City Manager/Cable TV	Police	Public Works
Shannon Murphy	Gabrielle Wimer	Daniel Rodriguez
Assistant Producer Writer	Forensic ID Specialist	Maintenance Worker
Community Development	Kyle Lofstrom	Transit
Sharon Yiu	Ian Maier	Ashley Koger
Engineering Technician III	Cameron Pigdon	Administrative Analyst
General Services	Police Officer	
George Valles		
Custodian		

Stretch

Your Limits

*Achieve your goals
by finding meaningful
reasons to work out.*

Staying excited about exercise is often the hardest part of getting healthier. By making your fitness goals personal, measurable, and specific – then tracking your progress – you might find motivation. Sprinkle in a few of these tips and you've got a solid strategy for wellness:

- Rethink your routine.
 - Maximize the benefits of exercise by mixing strength, aerobic, and flexibility training.
- Team up.
 - Push yourself with a little friendly competition by joining a team or club or by taking a class.
- Try, try again.
 - Everybody has off days, even the pros. Learn to deal with setbacks so that you can get back on track.

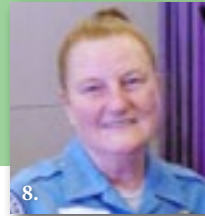
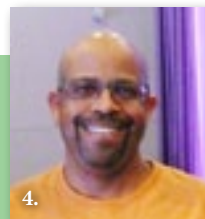
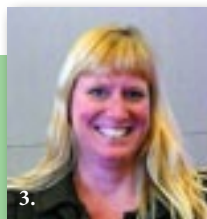
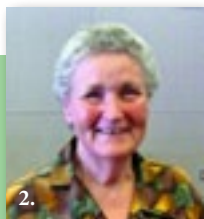
Learn more - visit kp.org/fitness to find more healthy inspiration

Provided by Kaiser Permanente

Service Awards

2013*Continued from page 2*

Service Awards lucky door prize winners: 1. Terri Connaughton, 2. Patricia Acosta, 3. Diane Megerdichian, 4. James Jones, Jr., 5. Steven Ebersole, 6. Sandra McJannett, 7. Gerry Pinela, 8. Cheryl Huddle, and Grand Prize winner, 9. John Kalinski.



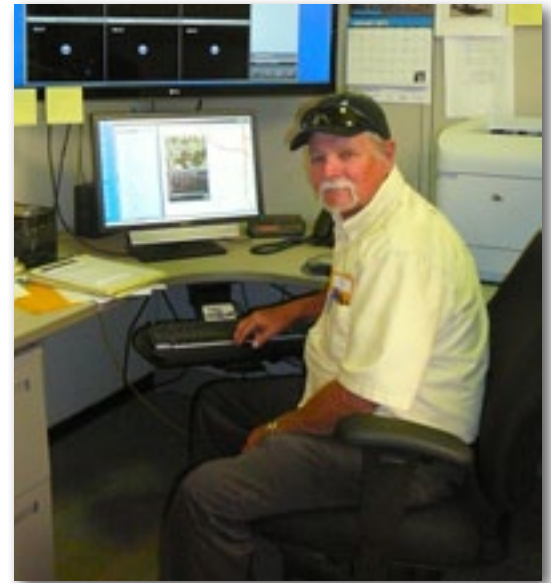
Traffic and Lighting

Continued from page 1

Two amazingly clean stencil trucks are out every day that it doesn't rain. Each truck is crewed by a Traffic Painter and a Maintenance Worker. Their day starts with a couple hours of preparation; the five gallon buckets of paint must spend time in the paint shakers, yesterday's paint is scraped off the giant stencils and fresh non-stick stencil coat is applied. They make sure there are plenty of red cones in two sizes on the truck; the larger cones are used for emergencies. On days when there is just one crew member, that worker can go out with the truck alone and paint red curbs.



Tony Valenzuela, Traffic Painter, and Doug Hudson, Maintenance Worker, make up one of two teams that paint legends, striping and red curbs at intersections – stencils are laid down to ensure a neat paint job, the paint dries in about 10 minutes on a warm day. In the fall, the crews take turns on the thermo-plastic trailer to paint busier intersections.



Traffic and Lighting Supervisor, Richard Hall, began his career in 1968 with Automatic Signal Company in Torrance testing the electronics in the signal cabinets before they were sent to the customer. He became the lead man in 1972 for a private signal maintenance company covering cities in Southern California and in 1981 came to the City. Here, Richard monitors the live video feeds from seven of the busiest intersections in the City.



"You get used to it," said Tony Smith, Traffic Signal Technician, of the 35 foot ascent in an aerial lift bucket to maintain street and signal lights, video detection cameras, and the pre-emption receivers that can be controlled by emergency vehicles to control traffic when necessary. The department also maintains the outdoor overhead lights in the City, some as high as 40 feet.



The Highway Striper truck is a high tech marvel that has one steering wheel in the cab to steer the vehicle and two in the back for the operator to control a carriage with paint guns that spray the lines being painted on the street.



Varik (Jimbo) Var and Goran Ibrahimovic, Traffic Signal Technicians explain the complex electronics and computer controls inside a typical traffic signal cabinet. On the outside is a second smaller cabinet that houses back-up batteries that can run the signals for seven or eight hours in case of a power outage. It takes about an hour to inspect the proper operation of the signals in an intersection. Computer records in the traffic signal controller provide information on current timing programs, power outages and problems with electronics or LED signal failures. The techs also check pedestrian cross-walk buttons; signal heads, all access openings and such to make sure everything is working properly. The techs attend classes given by various equipment manufacturers to update them on new technology and by the International Municipal Signal Association (IMSA). IMSA provides education for certifications in public safety operations.

To ensure the highest level of public service and safety, Traffic and Painting works closely with the many teams that make up the City of Torrance such as: Engineering, Operations, and Public Safety professionals just to name a few.

Gear Up Supervisory Training and Development Program

Gear Up is a supervisory development and training program designed to provide current and aspiring supervisors the principles, practices and resources to perform successfully as a first line leader. The program has two tracks – one for current supervisors and one for aspiring supervisors.

The current supervisor track is a 40 hour training program that equips employees with knowledge, skills, resources and technical expertise for the role of a supervisor.

Coursework includes:

- Reviewing Performance Progress
- Supervisory Skills for the First Line Supervisor
- Torrance Hiring Process
- Torrance Municipal Code Personnel Policies, Procedures and Practices; Civil Service System; and Work Rules
- Safety & Workers' Compensation
- Employee Discipline Process
- Performance Evaluation
- Leaves of Absence



Supervisors identify different skill sets they must use and how these skill sets look to employees in the first session of Gear Up Supervisors Training at the beginning of May.

The aspiring supervisors program is a 22 hour training program that focuses on leadership concepts and transitioning into the role of a supervisor to prepare them for the future.

Coursework includes:

- Your Leadership Journey
- Coaching for Peak Performance
- Motivating Others

Both tracks will include:

- Communicating for Leadership Success
- Creating a Service Culture
- Budget Overview, Purchasing and Agenda Process

Gear Up launched its Supervisor's Program on April 25, 2013. Fifteen current City Supervisors will attend eleven – two to four hour interactive sessions over six months. Classes will be taught by El Camino instructor, Desiree Saddler or City employees who are expert on internal procedures, policies and practices. "An indirect benefit of these sessions is the network that can develop between the participants as they share resources and discuss how to approach common issues," said Kelli Lee, program development team member, "Supervisors are an integral part of the organization that connects employees and management."



Torrance Trivia

Last Issue's Question:

Wilson Park has been the home of stray cats, skunks, raccoons and the occasional runaway dog. In 2007 an Eagle Scout project installed homes to attract a very unique former resident. What were these homes supposed to attract?

Answer – **BATS!**

Correct responders: Paula Kozinski, Vijay Prasad, Teresa Browning, Jack van der Linden, Debbie Parr, Joseph Simolo, Brian Perry, Kylene Phelan, Rachel Bieber, Cheryl Huddle and Jean-nie Fuller. And the winner of the gift certificate is: **Vijay Prasad!** Contact Myisha Phillips in HR for your prize – mphillips@TorranceCA.gov

New Question:

On December 15th, 1966, City Attorney Stanley Remelmeyer, declared that Torrance was a "complete urban environment". What momentous event led to the city attorney's announcement?

- Torrance population exceeds 140,000
- Milton Kaufman, the home builder, buys up the last large tract of land in the city
- The last cow leaves town
- The "Marriage of the Malls" makes the largest indoor retail center in the nation.
- The last farm is plowed over for the Whitefront parking lot

Thanks to Michael George for these Trivia Questions and Answers.

Email your answer to JanetStancliff3@gmail.com put "Torrance Trivia" in the subject line.